

LEGAL DEPARTMENT  
LESBIAN GAY  
BISEXUAL  
TRANSGENDER &  
HIV PROJECT



Hon. Claude M. Hilton  
Albert V. Bryan U.S. Courthouse  
401 Courthouse Square  
Alexandria, VA 22314

May 6, 2019

Re: In re Grand Jury Subpoena, CHELSEA MANNING, 19-DM-00003

Dear Hon. Judge Hilton:

I am writing in regard to Chelsea Manning in the above-referenced matter. I am a lawyer and Staff Attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). I represented Ms. Manning as her counsel in a civil case between 2013 and 2017. During that time, I visited with her in prison and spoke to her on the phone regularly. I was with her when she was released from prison in 2017 and have remained in contact with her on and off over the past two years. In total, we have probably spoken on over 200 occasions. I know Ms. Manning well as a client, an activist, and a friend. One constant in Ms. Manning's life is her unwavering commitment to her principles. She is willing to undergo physical, emotional, and spiritual pain in the service of those principles and based on my knowledge of her, I am certain that no punishment could coerce her to violate those principles.

For the years that I represented Ms. Manning, I watched her experience great emotional distress and health decline related to her incarceration. In addition to her two attempts at suicide during her incarceration at the United States Disciplinary Barracks (USDB), she experienced traumatic denials of health care and PTSD symptoms throughout her incarceration. When she was released, one of her great fears was returning to confinement and yet, it did not surprise me at all that she accepted incarceration over testifying where she was principally opposed to the proceeding. Even when urged by counsel to act in certain ways, I have watched that Ms. Manning would sooner undergo anguish than violate her principles.

Ms. Manning would likely die before giving in to a demand that she believes to be unjust. Her incarceration in Kuwait and then Quantico and the USDB very nearly killed her and yet she never wavered in her commitment to her strong sense of justice. I have no doubt that she would also risk death through incarceration at this time before testifying or engaging in a process that violated her principles.

Please feel free to contact me should you need any additional information.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chase Strangio". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chase Strangio  
ACLU Staff Attorney  
Former counsel to Chelsea Manning

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES  
UNION FOUNDATION  
LGBT AND HIV PROJECT  
125 BROAD STREET, 18TH FL  
NEW YORK, NY 10004-2400  
T/212.549.2627  
F/212.549.2650  
WWW.ACLU.ORG/LGBT